



PERCEPTION OF 2ND YEAR MBBS STUDENTS TOWARDS STUDENT-LED SEMINAR AS SMALL GROUP TEACHING METHOD

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: To introduce interactive teaching method like interactive student-led seminars and to know perception of students towards this method of teaching.

Methods: The present batch of 4th semester undergraduate students (160 numbers) was divided into 4 batches of 40 students each after taking written consent from them. They were given the topics for the seminar 1 month prior for preparation. Seminar was conducted in four practical hours. Feedback forms were evaluated by 5-Likert's Scale.

Results: Out of 160 students, 139 students participated in the seminar. Out of 139 students participated, 111 students (79.86%) agreed that it stimulated them to think critically at the subject, 130 students (93.53%) agreed that it assisted their learning and 110 students (79.14%) agreed that it encouraged their participation and made them feel like team members.

Conclusions: Student-Led Seminar as small group teaching method is more effective in deep understanding of the subject and critical thinking than didactic lectures and helps the students to improve the communication skills.

Key Words: Small group teaching, Student-Led seminar, Perception

INTRODUCTION

In majority of the medical colleges in India theory classes are being taken by didactic lectures, which is a passive method of teaching. In this method, there is little retention of memory and student attention decreases after 20 minutes. Therefore, there is a need to introduce interactive teaching methods like interactive student-led seminars and small group discussions. In interactive student-led seminars, participants obtain increased understanding of the subject, develop greater ability to assemble and present information, welcome opportunities to think critically, become more articulate and speak better in public with increased confidence and are stimulated for self-learning(1,2).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

- 1) To conduct student-led seminars for undergraduate students as interactive teaching in the department of

Microbiology, MIMS, Vizianagaram.

- 2) To get the filled feedback form from the students to evaluate this method of teaching.

METHODOLOGY

The present batch of 4th semester undergraduate students (160 numbers) was divided into 4 batches of 40 students each after taking written consent from them. They were given the topics for the seminar 1 month prior for preparation. We have chosen the topic "Immunology" because it is a subject to understand by critical thinking and correlation. The students who presented the seminar were selected randomly. It was conducted during practical hours in batch-wise in the month of July 2015. Four practical hours (one hour per day and two hours per week) were utilized for the same. Feedback forms were given to the student immediately after completion of the seminar and were received from them after filling of the form. Sufficient time was given to fill up the forms. These

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were evaluated by 5 –Likert's scale grading.

RESULTS

Out of 160 students, 139 students participated in the seminar. The table number-1 shows the result of filled feedback forms received from the students. Out of 139 students participated, 111 students (79.86%) agreed that it stimulated them to think critically at the subject, 130 students (93.53%) agreed that it assisted their learning and 110 students (79.14%) agreed that it encouraged their participation and made them feel like team members.

Fifty percent of the students did not respond to the open ended questions. Thirty one students have written there is better understanding of the subject, 22 students who were the presenters, have written there is improvement in communication skills and 9 students requested to conduct the seminars regularly.

Improvement suggested by the students:

- 1) More students to be involved as presenters in the seminars.
- 2) Topic to be small and specific.
- 3) To increase the time allotted for each topic.

DISCUSSION

In the present study, majority of the students agreed that interactive student-led seminars helped them to think critically with better understanding of the subject. The students, who presented seminar, felt that there is loss of stage fear with improvement in communication skill. K.G. Gomathi et al found that student led seminars encouraged students in self, active and peer-learning. Teamwork and communication skills were also learnt effectively (3). Zuzana de Jong et al. found that small group tutorial lead to greater satisfaction but better learning results were obtained with interactive seminars (4). In our study, majority of the students agreed that it made them feel like a team member. This is a good training for them as teamwork is being increasingly emphasized in healthcare and team training is now considered essential in medical education (5).

CONCLUSIONS:

From the results obtained in the present study, it is concluded that:-

- 1) Seminar as small group teaching method is more effective in deep understanding of the subject and critical thinking than didactic lectures.
- 2) It helps the students to improve the communication skills.

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Table 1: (n = 139)

Questionnaires		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Aims and objectives of the seminar were clearly explained to me	12	107	1	17	2
2	Seminars were conducted in a manner that ensure maximum preparation and participation by all members of the group	37	67	0	32	3
3	The quality of discussion in seminar was good.	22	101	0	15	1
4	The seminars encouraged participation and made me feel like a team member	53	57	0	25	4
5	The seminar stimulated me to think critically at the subject over the course of the module	36	75	0	27	1
6	Seminars provided a means of elaborating on developing the material supplied in the lectures.	26	97	0	15	1
7	Seminars assisted my learning in this subject.	24	106	0	9	0

Open ended questions:

- 1) Please list 3 things which you enjoyed about this seminar.
- 2) Please list 3 possible improvements about this seminar.